

Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Release 19.0

VOLUME IV SECTION 1



This section contains general overview information and guidance for schools and other agencies who use Direct Loan (DL) Tools Release 19.0 in combination with EDEExpress, third-party software and/or other in-house systems to track, analyze, reconcile, and rebuild William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan data processed by the COD System for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 Award Years.

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Overview

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Release 19.0 is a supplemental software product for Direct Loan participants. Starting in Summer 2019, you can download software and related user documentation from the U.S. Department of Education's Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site located at ifap.ed.gov.

DL Tools is a Windows-based application designed to provide the following functionality related to all Direct Loan schools' software:

- Compare the School Account Statement (SAS) to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDEExpress or an external file, and/or compare the SAS to the DL Tools Cash database.
- Print the SAS in a readable format.
- Track Cash Receipts (drawdowns) and Refunds of Cash.
- Rebuild your Direct Loan origination and disbursement records in EDEExpress using an automated process.
- Run the Disbursement Measurement Tool Report to help monitor Direct Loan records in your EDEExpress database.

DL Tools Release, 19.0 includes functionality for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 award years. In future versions, we will add functionality for each new cycle year, enabling DL Tools to assist you with Direct Loan tasks for the three most recent cycles.

DL Tools Comparison

DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports, located in the Compare dialog box, are designed to be run using the SAS Reports with YTD detail, not monthly detail. See Volume IV, Section 8 of this technical reference for information about default settings and SAS option selections. You can change your report options (YTD detail, for example) by accessing the COD System Web site at cod.ed.gov.

All Direct Loan schools can use the Compare and Cash Management functionality. The Rebuild function is used by schools to rebuild accepted Direct Loan records in EDEExpress for Windows databases. However, non-EDEExpress users can export data from a rebuilt EDEExpress database to recreate non-EDEExpress loans or databases.

The Disbursement Measurement Tool Report (available in DL Tools if connected to EDEExpress) and the List–Document Activity report (available in EDEExpress) assist schools with monitoring current operations, procedures, and program status, and can also help meet the Quality Assurance requirement in the Direct Loan program. Tolerances can be applied when running these reports. Tolerances are guidelines you set for evaluating the effectiveness of your school's Direct Loan processes and procedures. Your school decides which reports to use, when to run them, and what action to take as a result. You can use them to review progress as part of a continuous improvement plan.

Using DL Tools without EDEExpress

If you do not use EDEExpress, you can still use DL Tools to assist in reconciling. You can import cash, loan, or disbursement data from your external Direct Loan system into DL Tools, thus creating a temporary database you can use to compare your data to the SAS.

- To add school cash data to the newly created database, import the External Cash file (DLEXCASH).
- To add school loan data to the newly created database, import the External Loan file (DLEXLOAN).
- To add school disbursement data to the newly created database, import the External Disbursement file (DLEXDISB).

Fixed-length record layouts for each of these file types are included in Volume IV, Section 3 of the *2019-2020 Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Technical Reference*.

When creating your external files, use the standard file names of DLEXCASH, DLEXLOAN, and DLEXDISB as noted at the top of each record layout. You need to include a carriage return/ line feed (CR/LF) (ASCII characters 13 and 10) at the end of each data record. At the end of the file, no end of file (EOF) marker is required, just the CR/LF markers.

These record layouts are used without header or trailer records.

Users always see the “-R” label added to software fields.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, DL Tools for Windows, Release 19.0 is compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired.

Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in DL Tools software entry fields. To accommodate this restriction, DL Tools fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.

DL Tools Release 19.0 Enhancements & Changes

The following enhancements and changes are available in DL Tools Release 19.0:

General

- **Program Year 2019-2020 Added** – We added DL Tools functionality and message classes applicable to program year 2019-2020.

Disbursement Detail External Add (DLEXDISB)

- **Disbursement Date Range Updated for 2019-2020** – We updated import functionality for the Disbursement Detail External Add file (message class DLEXDISB) to only allow a date range of 10/1/2018 to 12/28/2023 for 2019-2020 disbursement transactions.

Getting Help

Software Help

DL Tools Release 19.0 provides a help system to assist you with system setup and more details regarding use of this software tool.

General help is available from the menu bar and field help is available by pressing the F1 key. See the Using Help topic for more information.

Make sure you include both your TG number and your telephone number in your e-mail message.

CPS/SAIG Technical Support

For questions regarding technical assistance and software functionality, call CPS/SAIG Technical Support at: 800/330-5947, TDD/TTY: 800/511-5806. E-mail CPS/SAIG Technical Support at: CPSSAIG@ed.gov. A representative will respond within one business day.

Additional Assistance

If you have questions regarding the Direct Loan reconciliation or closeout process, please contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/848-0978 or send an e-mail to CODSupport@ed.gov.

You can also post questions regarding DL Tools on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information on subscribing to FSATECH, go to ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html.

Federal Student Aid staff or the financial aid partner responsible for the system will research your question and post a response to the listserv so that everyone can benefit from the information.